

**Dance Traditions - DANC 211/4 – Winter 2016**  
Contemporary Dance Department, Faculty of Fine Arts  
**Instructor: Philip Szporer**  
**Course Assistant: Keven Lee**  
**Monday 2-5 p.m. – location: H-609**  
**Office Hours: by appointment, on Mondays** (location, GM 500.71)  
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The course is a survey of the history of dance, focusing on Modernism, Post-Modernism and beyond.

**Course Readings**

See articles and chapters that are posted on the Course Reserves list. Go to the Moodle site and click on "Course Reserves" in the upper left column of the screen. There will be no course text to purchase for this class. Over the duration of the term I may add selections to this list.

Please feel free to suggest exceptionally good articles, books, video clips, sound bytes that you have found so that we can share your intellectual discoveries.

**Objectives and Teaching Strategies:** The course will attempt to train students in basic research skills, the importance of historical context, the use and documentation of primary and secondary sources, the critical interpretation of texts, and the implications of methodological approaches, especially to understand and dialogue with ideas and information found through readings and class lectures and discussion. Students will write in a variety of genres, including the personal essay and research paper. They will also work in groups to effectively create a collaborative project, i.e., an oral presentation, in which students utilize technological skills, make connections across course readings and experiences, integrate multiple perspectives drawn from different disciplinary and cultural contexts, and engage in critical inquiry about information and ideas.

**Summary of Criteria of Evaluation:**

1. Quiz (1):	15%
2. Field Interview (1):	5%
3. Abstract (1):	5%
4. Video clip analysis (1):	5%
5. Group Oral Presentation:	25%
6. Final Essay (1):	20%
7. Moodle Entries (10):	15%
8. Attendance/Active Participation:	10%

**• Details about the assignments and quiz:**

**• Quiz (15 points)**

There will be one short answer in-class quiz based on facts, ideas, and material from class lectures, discussion, readings, and media examples.

**• Mock Field Interview (5 points)**

Structure probing questions for an imagined field interview with one choreographer or dancer discussed in Lecture 1 and 2, in relation to ideas surrounding cultural/racial diversity, intercultural/transcultural stereotypes, the construction of the "other", as well as representation and notions of cultural ownership (appropriation, hybridity, authenticity).

Write five (5) intelligent and informed open-ended questions based on research, i.e., never ask questions producing yes or no answers. Also, briefly detail key points that you might imagine emanating as answers to your questions. Typed, doubled-spaced (reasonable font size).

• **Moodle entries** (15 points – 10 entries x 1.5 points)

Prior to every class, students will enter one question and a possible response (about one paragraph or 100-150 words) on the course Moodle site, based on the chosen reading for that week. The substance of the entry should address ideas in the readings, and not standard biographical information about the artist. This exercise is designed to focus attention on the key issues in the particular reading – what questions or concerns did the article/chapter raise for you? Do not re-cap what the author has written. The process of questioning in this manner helps students process the material, and ensures that they are well prepared for the class discussion. If there is no reading indicated for that week, then no Moodle entry is required. Note: There is no Moodle entry for Week 1 (see Abstract assignment). Late entries (i.e., after Monday at 2 p.m.) will not garner points.

• **Video clip analysis** (5 points)

Write a one-page (250 words) “textual” analysis in response to the selected scene from Édouard Lock’s *Amelia*, listed on the Moodle site for Lecture 6 (Feb. 15). Typed, double-spaced (with reasonable font size). Keep in mind a central question: What do you see?

1. Detail setting, dramatic structure, texture, and thematic meaning, if any.
2. You might write about the use of basic compositional techniques (weight, spacing of dancers, focus, effort)
3. You might write about the overall effect of viewing the dance.
4. Talk about the cinematic techniques regarding colour/light, sound, cinematography, editing, characterization, blocking, etc., used in the clip, and their effect?

• **Abstract** (5 points)

Select one of the two readings offered in Week 1, and examine the main arguments in the chapter – do not exceed 150 words. The abstract (for the arts and humanities) is not a review, nor does it analyse or evaluate the writing. Simply, read and provide an overview of the original. You can use key words found in the reading, but this must all be in your own words, i.e., do not quote from the chapter. Grading of the abstract is based on clarity of expression, understanding of material, and your ability to elucidate the relevance, significance, and essential meaning of the chapter. Every word contributes to the content. Typed, doubled-spaced, reasonable font size. No bibliography or footnotes required, unless warranted.

• **Group Oral Presentation** (25 points)

The oral presentations will be structured in order to give an overview of one artist/group, exhibition, or performance. Please indicate what the artist is expressing (for or against), and convey the significance of your subject’s intellectual and creative contributions efficiently and effectively. The goal is to spark sustained dialogue among students. Further, a one-page report (250 words, maximum) on the evolving creative process of the presentation is to be submitted on the assigned day of demonstration.

**Focus:** Select an individual or a group and put into context their impact within the framework of three larger subjects in dance history:

1. The history of era (political/social/gender concerns) or genre/context of dance;
2. Comparing and contrasting dance forms/attitudes/theories, and different eras of time;
3. The life and work of notable figure (choreographer or dancer).

#### >Presentation Guidelines

Representative(s) from each group (four or five students per group) are required to briefly meet with the instructor during week 5 (Feb. 8) to identify project topics.

Parameters for the projects will be discussed in class during week 2. A written project proposal of 1-2 paragraphs will be turned in week 6 (Feb. 15).

Group work is an important part of university education, and the nature of the work world today increasingly requires individuals to have problem-solving and team-building skills. What can be learnt about subjects by considering them together that we cannot learn on our own?

In this assignment, every member of the group should participate. Please keep in mind two principles: You are here i) to learn, and ii) be respectful of other points of view.

For the presentation, think about how you are going to divide the time allocated for your group. (Hint: Don't spend ten minutes on your introduction!) Consider the format of your presentation. Do you want to project illustrations? How can brief audio or video clips make important points?

In consultation with the instructor, prepare a **twenty-minute (20) presentation** on an agreed topic. Speak either from notes or from a fully articulated text but either way please must bear the time limit in mind and be as succinct as possible in your handling of your material. More detail (e.g. quotations from set texts or from critics, dates, etc.) can, if desired, be included in a handout or in the ensuing discussion.

Your final task as presenter is to generate discussion at the end of the presentation. Prepare yourself for likely questions. Given the brief nature of the presentation simply ask students to interject only if absolutely necessary.

#### >Checklist

- The better the presentation and discussion, the better the learning outcome for all.
- Be imaginative. Where possible use visual aids, projections, slides, handouts, and performance, again bearing in mind the constraints of time and ensuring that your material is directly relevant, illuminating, well-illustrated, and not merely decorative. The main points of your argument should be clearly expressed, and the structure of your presentation coherent and logical.
- When grading, I will consider both the quality of content and the effective presentation.
- Group oral presentations must be conducted in English.

#### • **Research Paper** (20 points)

Written essay, length: 8 pages (or 2000 words), not including bibliography, videography, or footnotes.

Please provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope, as this will be the only way to receive your marked essay.

>Focus: Select a single dance artist or a group and consider the social, cultural and the

aesthetic shift realized through their efforts, or conversely how socio-political, economic and cultural forces impacted their work.

A written proposal for the research paper (one paragraph maximum) will be turned in week 7 (Feb. 29), at the latest, for approval by the instructor. Provide the focus for your paper. The final paper will be submitted at the beginning of Lecture 11 or 12 (Apr. 4 or 11 – absolute deadline, no extension).

Papers must be original, be written specifically for this course, clearly organized, and should articulate a coherent theme or argument and use appropriate evidence to support your case. Students must use the appropriate scholarly literature and academic sources, such as journal articles, in the relevant fields. Papers must be correctly and completely referenced, using the Chicago standard reference or footnoting style (<http://0-www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.mercury.concordia.ca/16/contents.html>.) The essay should have no fewer than five (5) scholarly references. Each of these factors will be taken into consideration in evaluating the paper.

>Note: Two group writing workshops related to your research papers will be scheduled between 5:30-7:00 p.m., March 21, and another date TBA. Details on location forthcoming.

**Policy for Writing Evaluation:** Students are evaluated on their mastery of language arts skills. To receive the best grade, you must

- Demonstrate maturity and originality of thought reflected by the ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate.
- Sustain the development of a point or idea over the length of the assignment.
- Use organized paragraphs and transitional devices.
- Make conventional use of capitalization and punctuation.
- Thoroughly edit your work for grammar, syntax, and spelling of standard English or French, with particular attention to sentence structure and to agreement between subjects, verbs, pronouns and antecedents. Composition counts!

Assignments may be written in French or English. Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with a clear font size, paginated, and include your name, a title, as well as proper citations/references, bibliography, filmography/videography. Grades are based on clarity of expression, observational, descriptive and analytic skills, research methods, references, footnotes and bibliography.

All assignments must be handed in hard copy, and not sent via e-mail. E-mailed assignments will only be accepted in cases of grave illness or circumstance.

**Grading Table for the Course (Dept. of Contemporary Dance):**

90-100	A+	4.3
85-89	A	4.0
80-84	A-	3.7
77-79	B+	3.3
73-76	B	2.7
70-72	B-	2.5
67-69	C+	2.3

63-66	C	2.0
60-62	C-	1.7
57-59	D+	1.3
53-56	D	1.0
50-52	D-	0.7

• **Attendance/Participation** (10 points)

Attendance will be recorded at the beginning of every class. According to department rules, no more than two justifiable absences will be allowed. Students will be expected to participate actively in class discussions. **If you miss one class, your attendance/participation mark will automatically decrease 5%, two absences 10%.**

Exceptions: if you have a justified absence or a bona fide documented emergency (for example, illness, injury, hospitalization) Please advise early in the term if you are observing religious holidays. Personal travel is not an acceptable reason.

Students are expected to participate actively in critical class discussions based on readings, lectures, conceptual and image research, and screenings. Here is a rough guide that will help you understand how my assessment of your participation:

- If you attend class every week and say little or nothing: 0-4
- If you attend class every week and speak, but you never do more than regurgitate the course lectures, or voice your personal opinions: 4-7
- If you attend class every week and engage in discussion, listen attentively, and what you have to say is demonstrably informed by the course readings and discussions: 8-10

**Lateness policy**

Please note that it is exceedingly disruptive to arrive late to class, and students who do so will be marked as absent. Likewise, **students who leave early or who skip parts of the lecture will be marked as absent.** If there are reasonable grounds to be absent for part of the class, please advise me of your situation; it is your responsibility to take the necessary measures to arrive on campus early enough. Should you end up arriving late to the lecture, or if your body demands that you leave the room temporarily, please try to be as discrete as possible in order not to disturb your fellow students. Do this by holding the door gently as it closes rather than letting it bang shut on its own.

Late work is not encouraged. If you have a valid reason for postponing assignment submissions, such as a death in the family or a serious illness, please contact me (or the Department Assistant), and we'll arrange a reasonable alternative. Otherwise, a point will be deducted for each day the paper is late (i.e., 1 point).

**Plagiarism**

The most common offense under the Academic Code of Conduct is plagiarism, which the Code defines as **"the presentation of the work of another person as one's own or without proper acknowledgement"** (Article 16<sup>a</sup>).

This could be material copied word for word from books, journals, Internet sites, professor's course notes, etc. It could be material that is paraphrased but closely resembles the original source. It could be the work of a fellow student, for example, an answer on a quiz, data for a lab report, a paper or assignment completed by another student. It might be a paper purchased through one of the many available sources.

Plagiarism does not refer to words alone - it can also refer to copying images, graphs, tables, and ideas. "Presentation" is not limited to written work. It also includes oral presentations, computer assignments and artistic works. If you translate the work of another person into French or English and do not cite the source, this is also plagiarism. If you cite your own work without the correct citation, this too is plagiarism.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty and to ensure you avoid committing any offenses by reading the University's Academic Code of Conduct, available at the following sites:

[http://web2.concordia.ca/Legal\\_Counsel/policies/english/AC/Code.html](http://web2.concordia.ca/Legal_Counsel/policies/english/AC/Code.html)  
<http://secretariat.concordia.ca/policies/academic/en/AcademicCodeConduct2008.pdf>

### **Other Course Policies**

**Language:** The language of instruction is English. You may submit your written work in French; however, my comments on your papers will normally be in English.

**Electronic Equipment:** Turn off and put away all electronic devices, i.e., mobile phones, iPods, videogames, etc... This class is *not* the place to check Facebook, surf, text-message, or engage in other distracting and disruptive behaviour with electronic devices. Save it for after class or during the break. If there is a legitimate reason you must leave your mobile phone on, please notify me in advance, put the phone on vibrate mode, and sit in the front row on the aisle so you can easily depart the class to take your urgent call. Students breaching this policy during the lecture will be penalized on their participation grades, including a possible grade of zero for participation, at the discretion of the course instructor. Please take this warning seriously.

Laptop computers are acceptable for note-taking alone, and not for any other purpose.

**Food:** No eating in class. Take care of your hunger before the session.

**Chatting in class:** Refrain from distracting chatting with your neighbours, out of respect for the other students and the professor. Save your conversation until the class is over.

### **Campus Resources**

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the professor and the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities at the beginning of the semester.

<http://supportservices.concordia.ca/disabilities/>

**Student Learning Services:** Will help to improve your academic skills and learning potential (including writing skills). <http://learning.concordia.ca/>

## **Weekly Schedule**

### **Lecture 1 – Jan. 11**

**Birth of Modern Dance:** Isadora Duncan, François Delsarte, Loie Fuller, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn.

**Collaboration in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century:** Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, Vaslav Nijinsky.

**Readings:** Desmond, Jane. "Dancing Out the Difference: Dancing out the difference: Cultural Imperialism and Ruth St. Denis's *Radha* of 1906." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 17, Issue 1, pp. 28-49.

Burt, Ramsey. "Modernism, Masculinity and Sexuality in Nijinsky's *L'Après-midi d'un faune*." In *Writing Dance Together* (Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2009) pp. 25-44.

### **Lecture 2 – Jan. 18**

**American Modern Dance Heroes:** Martha Graham, Erick Hawkins, Doris Humphrey, José Limon

**German Expressionism:** Rudolf Laban, Mary Wigman, Kurt Jooss.

**Readings:** Hales, Barbara. "Waking the Dead: Medium as Therapist in Albert Talhoff and Mary Wigman's 'Totenmal'". *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* 40.1 (Summer 2013): 58-73.

Jowitt, Deborah. "Heroes and Visions." *Dance Now*. Winter 2008/2009, Vol. 17, Issue 4, pp. 23-28.

Thomas, Victoria. "Martha Graham's Haunting Body: Autobiography at the Intersection of Writing and Dancing." *Dance Research Journal* 40.1 (Summer 2008): 3-16.

\*\*\*\*N.B.: Tuesday, Jan. 19 – Deadline for withdrawal with tuition refund from winter-term courses.

### **Lecture 3 – Jan. 25**

**Black American Perspectives:** Josephine Baker, Katherine Dunham, Pearl Primus, Alvin Ailey.

**Guest:** Library Orientation with dance librarian Jared Wiercinski. In class.

**Readings:** Kraut, Anthea. "Between Primitivism and Diaspora: The Dance Performances of Josephine Baker, Zora Neale Hurston, and Katherine Dunham." *Theatre Journal* 55.3 (Oct 2003): 433-450.

Valis-Hill, Constance. "Katherine Dunham's Southland: Protest in the Face of Repression." *Dance Research Journal*, vol. 26, no. 2 Autumn/1994, pp. 1-10.

**>>DUE: Assignment 1: Field Interview - 5 points**

#### **Lecture 4 – Feb. 1**

**Beyond Modernism:** Merce Cunningham, Alwin Nikolais

**Readings:** Brown, Carolyn. "Summerspace: Three Revivals". *Dance Research Journal* 34:1, Summer 2002, pp. 74-82.

Copeland, Roger. "A Conversation with Alwin Nikolais." *Dance Scope*, Fall/Winter 1973/74. Vol. 8. No. 1, pp 41-46.

**>>DUE: Assignment 2: Abstract - 5 points**

#### **Lecture 5 – Feb. 8**

**Post-Modern Innovations:** Perspectives and concerns of the Judson Church artists and the Contact Improvisation movement (Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, Steve Paxton, Simone Forti, Meredith Monk, etc...), and the emergence of related forms and connections in Québec and Canada (EDAM, Catpoto, Andrew de Lotbinière-Harwood).

**Readings:** Banes, Sally. "Choreographic Methods of the Judson Dance Theater." In *Writing Dancing in the Age of Postmodernism* (Wesleyan University Press, 1994) pp. 211-226.

Lepecki, Andre. "Toppling Dance." In *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement* (Taylor & Francis, 2006), pp. 65-86.

Paxton, Steve & Robert Steijn. "Training Perception." TALK / SNDO 1982-2006 online. Ed. Jeroen Fabius (School for New Dance Development, 2009), pp. 1-9.

**>> Meetings with instructor re group presentation proposals prior to class.**

#### **Lecture 6 – Feb. 15**

**Parallel Universe: Québec Dancing into the 21st Century**

Consideration of social, political and cultural shifts in Québec, with emphasis on Groupe de la Place Royale, Nouvelle Aire, the major figures (Édouard Lock, Ginette Laurin, Paul-André Fortier, Marie Chouinard, Jean-Pierre-Perreault), the rise of the independents, and a new generation.

**Readings:** Cornell, Katherine. "The Sounds of Bodies Dancing: An Examination of Jean-Pierre Perreault's 'Joe'." *Conversations Across The Field Of Dance Studies* 32 (2012): 30-32.

Tembeck, Iro. "The Flowering of the Independents", in *Dancing in Montreal*. (Madison, WI.: Studies in Dance History, The Journal of the Society of Dance History Scholars), pp. 79-98.

Thain, Alanna and Virginia K. Preston. "Tendering the Flesh: The ABCs of *Dave St-Pierre's* 'Contemporary Utopias.'" *TDR*, Winter 2013, pp. 28-51.

**\*\*QUIZ #1 – in class – 15 points**

**\*\*\*Submit group presentation proposals – no more than 1-2 paragraphs are necessary.**

\*\*\*\*\* Feb. 22 – STUDY WEEK – no lecture \*\*\*\*\*

**Lecture 7 – Feb. 29**

**Contemporary Strategies in Asia:** Butoh (Japan), plus the traditional-contemporary dialectic in Asian dance.

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**Independent work/study time for group projects (in class).**

**Readings:** Chatterjea, Ananya. "Chandralekha: Negotiating the Female Body..." In *Moving History/Dancing Cultures (A Dance History Reader)*. Eds. Ann Dills & Ann Cooper Albright (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2001) pp. 389-397.

Hornblow, Michael. "Busting Bodies of Thought." *Performance Paradigm 2* (March 2006), pp. 26-44.

**DUE: Assignment 3:** Clip analysis of Lock's *Amelia* – 5 points

\*\*\*Submit proposals for the final paper.

**Lecture 8 – Mar. 7**

**Group presentations** – (groups TBA) – 25 points

\*\*\*NB: March 13: **Last day for academic withdrawal from winter-term courses.**

**Lecture 9 – Mar. 14**

**Group presentations** – (groups TBA) – 25 points

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**Virtuosic Bodies:** Shantala Shivalingappa, Louise Lecavalier, Elizabeth Streb

**Readings:** Cooper Albright, Ann. "Techno Bodies: Muscling with Gender in Contemporary Dance" in *Choreographing Difference: The Body and Identity in Contemporary Dance* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1997), pp. 28-55.

Wilkinson, Alec. "Rough-and-Tumble," *The New Yorker*, June 29, 2015, pp. 48-55.

**Lecture 10 – Mar. 21**

**Contemporary German and Belgian Engagement:** The emergence of Tanztheatre in Germany (Susanne Linke, Reinhild Hoffman, Pina Bausch), plus William Forsythe.

+ Wim Vandekeybus, Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker, Alain Platel, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Meg Stuart

**Readings:** Servos, Norbert. "Pina Bausch: Dance and Emancipation," in *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader*. Ed. Alexandra Carter. (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 36-45.

Laermans, Rudi. "Sharing Experience" in *Being an Artist in Post-Fordist Times*, eds. Pascal Gielen and Paul de Bruyne (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2009), pp. 81-96.

\*\*\*\* **Mar. 28**

**Easter Monday. University closed.**

**Lecture 11 – Apr. 4 \*\*\*FINAL ESSAY DUE (first call) – 20 points**

**Guest Lecture:** Alexandra “Spicey” Lande, choreographer, artistic director Bust-A-Move +

**African Contemporary Dance Forms:** Faustin Linyekula, Salia ni Seydou, Germaine Acogny, Vincent Mantsoe, Rennie Harris, Savion Glover, Zab Maboungou.

**Readings:** Dixon-Gottschild, Brenda. “My Africa Is Always Becoming: Outside the Box with Faustin Linyekula.” (New York: MAPP International Productions, 2007). Essay commissioned by The Africa Contemporary Arts Consortium.

Cauthery, Bridget E. “Vincent Sekwati Mantsoe: Trance As A Cultural Commodity.” In *Fields in Motion: Ethnography in the Worlds of Dance*. Ed. Dena Davida. (Wilfred Laurier Press, 2012), pp. 319-338.

**Lecture 12 – Apr. 11 \*\*\*FINAL ESSAY DUE (absolute final deadline)**

**Dancing for the Screen – Canadian Perspectives**

A survey of dance for camera creations and the development of this genre in Canada.

**Reading:** Szporer, Philip. “Northern Exposures.” From *Envisioning Dance: On Film and Video*. Eds. Judy Mitoma, Dale Steiber, & Elizabeth Zimmer (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 168-175.

**\*\*Note:** The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.